



Senator Allen Paul

200 W. Washington St.
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News from the Indiana State Senate

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News from the Indiana State Senate

HoosierRx Program Discounts Prescription Drugs for Low-Income Senior Citizens

America leads the world in pushing the bounds of science to bring new prescription drugs to the market, resulting in lives saved and an increased quality of life. There are high costs involved in bringing these drugs to the open market. Part of that price tag is passed on to the consumer, which causes patients who do not have drug coverage to suffer financially. As a relief to those patients, some new programs have been established to help with the costs of prescription drugs.

The U.S. government has launched a new drug discount card that will provide immediate financial relief to seniors. This program, which took effect on June 1, allows recipients to choose a discount card program that best suits their needs. Medicare will be providing reliable and accessible information. Anyone who is enrolled in Medicare Part A or Part B and not receiving Medicare benefits is eligible

for the discount drug card program. For more information or to become enrolled you may call **1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)** or visit the Medicare website at www.medicare.gov.

HoosierRx is a state program that helps to shift the cost of prescription drugs away from low-income seniors. HoosierRx was enacted four years ago by the General Assembly and allows seniors who qualify to receive a 75 percent discount on the cost of medications. This program will be coordinated with the Medicare discount drug card to maximize savings.

Low-income Hoosiers may obtain an application from local pharmacies or by calling the phone number below.

For more information
www.in.gov/HoosierRx
or call 1-866-267-4679

Indiana's Do Not Call List

Indiana is one of 40 states that have the means to protect citizens against unwanted and unsolicited phone calls. In 2001, the Indiana General Assembly passed the "Telephone Privacy Program," which provides consumers the opportunity to avoid telemarketer calls at home.

The Indiana Telephone Privacy Program allows Hoosiers to put their home telephone numbers on a "do not call" list. This list is updated quarterly and distributed to telemarketing companies. These companies can face hefty fines if they are in violation of Indiana guidelines.

Getting your name on the "do not call" list is surprisingly easy. To enroll, simply call the toll-free number (1-888-834-9969) or visit the Attorney General's website at www.in.gov/attorneygeneral/telephone.

Because this program is in the early stages of implementation, there are still a few kinks that need to be worked out. For example, now that telemarketers are unable to reach you at home, they are looking for another outlet. Later this year, a wireless subscriber directory sponsored by the Cellular Telecommunications and Internet Association, will be published. It is speculated that this directory will include about 75 percent of all mobile phone numbers and will be accessible by real estate agents, telemarketers and other on-the-go professionals.

The federal government also is addressing this issue with legislation that will prevent wireless-phone companies from automatically distributing cell numbers into this directory. To prevent your mobile phone number from being distributed, please add it to Indiana's "do not call" list.

Indiana Farms

..... Are They In Jeopardy?

Indiana loses approximately 100,000 acres of farmland a year to the growth and development of subdivided neighborhoods. Hamilton and Johnson Counties have seen the most urban growth in recent years and because of that, family farms are being forced to sell out to developers.

According to the Indiana Agricultural Statistics Services at Purdue University, the majority of farm loss occurred in mid-size farms and operations, which annually generate between \$10,000 and \$100,000 per farm. Smaller and larger farms are either growing or have been profitable enough to continue their operations.

This same research has found that commercial farms are consistently large enough to produce a positive return and those who own smaller farms are not living solely off of the crop revenue.

We in the legislature have tried to step in and help prevent Indiana from losing more farms. In

the 2004 legislative session, I supported a measure that would encourage the preservation of farmland. Senate Bill 362 would have allowed the Indiana Land Resource Council to work with local area planning departments to offer farmers and land owners compensation for voluntarily selling easements to restrict the land from developments.

I believed then, and still believe, that SB 362 will be of great significance to our farmers and farmland. SB 362 passed the Senate but did not pass the House of Representatives because of time constraints, but look for a similar bill during the 2005 legislative session.

Farmland has been and will continue to be the foundation for Indiana's largest industry. We must work together to save this precious land and Indiana's heritage.



Consumer Information

Unclaimed Property

The Attorney General reports thousands of unclaimed property listings all across the state of Indiana. Some possible sources of unclaimed property are: credit balances, old savings and checking accounts, unpaid wages, mutual fund shares, insurance proceeds, uncashed traveler's checks, and utility deposits.

You can contact the Indiana Attorney General's office to see if you or a relative has a claim.

Visit www.indianauclaimed.com or call, toll-free, **1-866-IN-CLAIM** (1-866-462-5246).

Direct Mail Lists

Tired of receiving advertising through the mail? Remove your name from direct mail lists by visiting www.dmaconsumers.org or write to:

Mail Preference Service
Attn: Dept 12851374
Direct Marketing Association
PO Box 282
Carmel, NY 10512

National No-Call List

Indiana led the way with the creation of a no-call registry. Federal legislators followed suit by creating a national do not call list. Consumers now can list both home and mobile phone numbers in order to prevent unsolicited telemarketing calls. To register your phone number on the national list, visit www.donotcall.gov. Additions to the list are updated every three months.

Voting Record

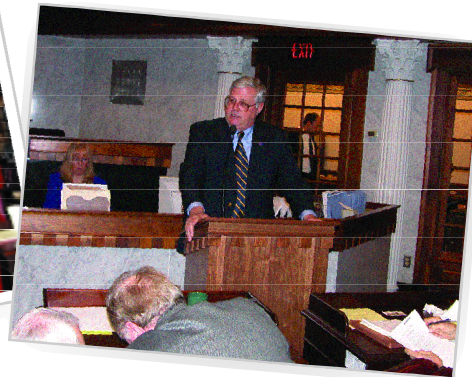
State Senator Allen Paul has been recognized by Senate President Pro Tem Robert D. Garton for achieving an outstanding voting attendance record during the 2004 legislative session. Senator Paul was present for 100 percent of 341 votes.

"A legislator's foremost responsibility is to be present when the votes are taken," Garton said. "Senator Paul demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to the citizens he represents by compiling an outstanding voting attendance record."

The 2004 legislative session ended March 4. During the session, 503 Senate bills and 459 House Bills were filed. Ten percent of those bills were sent to and signed by the governor.



F.A.Q.



Frequently Asked Questions About Indiana State Government

Q: Why is the Indiana General Assembly called a "citizen legislature?"

A: Indiana lawmakers spend only a few months each year at the Capitol. The rest of the year, each legislator lives and works in the district he or she represents. Our part-time legislature offers substantial savings to Indiana taxpayers. The National Conference of State Legislatures ranks Indiana 45 among the 50 states with regard to the expenditures of the legislature per capita. Less than 0.5 percent of the state's General Fund is spent on the legislature.

Q: Where is the money generated from gaming profits, such as the Hoosier Lottery, river boats, pari-mutuel, etc., going?

A: Of the \$670 million of the state's share of gaming profits in 2003, \$294 million was dedicated to the Property Tax Replacement Fund to help subsidize homeowners' local property tax bills through payment of homestead credits. The second-largest share, \$236 million, cuts the "license plate tax," the excise tax Indiana motorists pay annually when renewing their vehicle license plates, by up to 50 percent yearly.

Q: How does the General Assembly function when it is not in session?

A: The Legislative Council is composed of 16 legislators, including the speaker of the House, president pro tempore, and floor leaders of the majority and minority parties. It is designed to provide an interim coordination structure for the General Assembly. Created in 1967 by combining and expanding existing legislative service agencies, the Council assists the General Assembly through its selection of interim study committees, research, fiscal analysis, and bill drafting staff.

Q: How does a senator author a bill?

A: A senator takes an idea for a bill to the non-partisan Legislative Services Agency. The staff provide necessary legal, fiscal, and research capabilities for the General Assembly. Drafting legislation, including major revisions of the Indiana Code, compiling and publishing the rules and regulations of state agencies, assisting study committees during the interim and standing committees during session, and furnishing figures on the estimated cost of existing or proposed state services are among the tasks performed by the LSA staff.



Get Involved!

How You Can Participate in the Indiana General Assembly

Voting is one very important way to make sure your views and concerns are being represented in government, but there are many other ways citizens can get involved to make our state a better place to live.

Write letters: During a typical day, a public official receives dozens of e-mails and letters with messages conveying his or her constituents' interest in a particular bill or issues. The key to getting your public officials' attention is to keep it simple, keep it short and make sure it's directed to the right person.

Attend Interim Study committees: During the interim, state legislators and local leaders meet publicly in study committees and commissions to discuss a variety of topics and decide if legislation is needed during the upcoming session. This is a great opportunity to hear discussion and voice your opinion. You can find the calendar of meetings online at: www.in.gov/legislative/interim/calendar. The calendar is updated regularly.

Attend Standing Committees: The legislative session allows the opportunity for citizens to come down to the Statehouse and listen to proposed legislation and provide public testimony. Often, you must request an opportunity to speak by contacting the committee chairmen before the meeting.

Visit web sites: The General Assembly and all state agencies have web sites that are available with information on a variety of topics and who to contact if you want more information. The General Assembly site has an area dedicated to when committee meetings are going, legislative surveys and links to email your senator. Go to www.in.gov/legislative.

Organize or attend local events: Many local communities have a variety of organizations dedicated to furthering a cause or improving the lives of its citizens. A great way to stay involved and give back is to attend functions sponsored by these groups. If you feel that an area needs representation, form an organization and work together to further your cause.



SNAPSHOT: Senator Allen Paul recites the Pledge of Allegiance at the start of a session day. The pledge is recited before the official beginning of each session day.

While the fast pace of session ended in March, senators still have a lot of work to do during the summer and fall months, also known as the interim.

Legislators form commissions, study committees and advisory boards to examine issues in detail and to give more focused attention to particular issues not addressed during the legislative session.

Protect Yourself From Identity Theft

Identify theft is quickly becoming the most prevalent and costly crime in the nation. Researchers estimate that criminals steal more than 600,000 victims' identities each year, costing consumers and the financial industry billions of dollars.

In 2003, the General Assembly passed legislation strengthening Indiana's identity theft law by protecting not only a person's Social Security number, but also his or her address, phone number, place of employment, employer's identification number and his or her mother's maiden name. The law also includes provisions to help victims untangle the damage incurred on their credit history by an identity thief.

If you would like more information, please contact the Consumer Protection Division in the Indiana Attorney General's office, toll-free, at 1-800-382-5516 or visit www.in.gov/attorneygeneral.

Reduce the chances of identity theft in your everyday life:

- Monitor the balances of your financial accounts and look for unexplained charges or withdrawals
- Track your mail. Failing to receive bills or other mail may signal an address change by an identity thief, as does receiving credit cards for which you did not apply
- Order a copy of your credit reports. Federal law allows consumers to get one free credit report per year
- Guard your Social Security number. Give it out only when absolutely necessary
- Invest in a cross-cutting paper shredder. Destroy credit card applications, checks, receipts, insurance documents and anything with your identifying information.

Interim Study Committees

During the non-session months, legislators serve on interim study committee and other panels to discuss topics that will be important in the upcoming session. This year, I have been asked to serve as the Vice-Chairman for the Interim Study Committee on Transportation Issues. This committee will tackle urban mass transportation matters, antique license plates and regional transportation funding. It will also confront recent Bureau of Motor Vehicle security issues and services.

In addition, I am serving on the Commission of Military and Veteran's Affairs. This commission Study matters relating to veterans and veterans affairs and also matters relating to the active and reserve members of the Armed Forces of the United States. I am also a member of the Civil War Flags Commission.